

arose. Together with the Executive Committee of the Peasants' Congress, this body was better qualified to speak in the name of the masses of the Russian people than any other organization—including the rump government.

The resignation of the Cadets' ministers made little change in the situation. They had been sitting on the edge of their Cabinet seats ever since the formation of the Coalition and had been a liability rather than an asset for the government. On the morning of July 16, the leaders of the Executive Committee met as usual for an informal discussion of current affairs. Tseretelli gave a brief report of the crisis. The Soviet representative had advised other members of the Cabinet to accept the Cadets' resignation. The government would continue in the present form until the plenary session of the All-Russian Executive Committee convened and determined the composition of the new Cabinet.

When we reached the Tauride Palace after this conference, we learned that the capital was in turmoil. Mass meetings were under way in the barracks and factories. Communist speakers and flags everywhere proclaimed "Resignation of Minister-Capitalists! All Power to the Soviets!" At noon soldiers in different parts of the city opened regimental arsenals and took rifles and munitions. Groups of enlisted men and workers went from barracks to barracks, from factory to factory; the First Machine Gunners were particularly active. In the Tauride Palace telephones rang incessantly. Men in the barracks asked for instructions: "Should our regiment go out? Who gave the call to arms?" We repeated the instruction of the Executive Committee: "No armed demonstrations in the streets."

Our men reported that agitation in the barracks was focused on the reprisals ordered by the government against the grenadier regiment that had fled from the battlefield. The All-Russian Executive Committee of Workers and Soldiers and that of Peasants convened for a joint session in the Tauride Palace and issued an appeal to the Petrograd garrison, explaining that, at the request of the army committee, the treasonous regiment had been disarmed. The appeal was sent to all regiments, read in the barracks, posted everywhere, and distributed in the form of handbills. It produced an effect. The mass of soldiers seemed to forget the disbanded regiment. But new slogans emerged. Now the Bolsheviks talked about the Declaration of Soldiers' Slavery.

Late in the afternoon regiments began to walk out of their barracks, fully armed, some with field kitchens and ambulances. The alarmed Commandant of the Petrograd Military District—without consulting the Tauride Palace—called up the High Command of the army in Mogilev and asked that reliable troops be sent to the capital. The